

## **THE OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE GERING CITY COUNCIL, DECEMBER 8, 2025.**

A regular meeting of the City Council of Gering, Nebraska was held in open session on December 8, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. at Gering City Hall, 1025 P Street, Gering, NE. Present were Mayor Ewing and Councilmembers Shields, Gillen, Frye, Kinsey, Wiedeman, Morrison, Jackson. Also present were City Administrator Pat Heath, City Clerk Kathy Welfl, and City Attorney Jim Ellison. Absent was Councilmember O'Neal. Notice of the meeting was given in advance by publication in the Star-Herald, the designated method of giving notice. All proceedings hereafter were taken while the meeting was open to the attendance of the public except as otherwise indicated.

### **CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Ewing called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and stated that a quorum of the Council was present and City business could be conducted.

1. Recital of the Pledge of Allegiance and Prayer
2. Roll Call
3. Excuse Council Member absence

**Motion by Councilmember Gillen to approve the absence of Councilmember Kinsey from the November 24, 2025 regular City Council meeting. Second by Councilmember Shields. There was no discussion. Mayor Ewing called for the vote. "AYES": Shields, Gillen, Frye, Kinsey, Wiedeman, Morrison, Jackson. "NAYS": None. Abstaining: None. Absent: O'Neal. Motion carried.**

### **OPEN MEETINGS ACT - NEB.REV.STAT. CHAPTER 84, ARTICLE 14**

Mayor Ewing stated: As required by State Law, public bodies shall make available at least one current copy of the Open Meetings Act posted in the meeting room. Agenda items may be moved up or down on the agenda at the discretion of the Mayor. As required by State Law, additions may not be made to this agenda less than 24 hours before the beginning of the meeting unless they are considered under this section of the agenda and the Council determines that the matter requires emergency action.

### **CONSENT AGENDA:**

(Items under the Consent Agenda are proposed for adoption by one action for all items unless any member of Council requests that an item be considered separately.)

1. Approve minutes of the November 24, 2025 Regular City Council meeting
2. Approve Claims
3. File for record Application for Solid Waste Transfer Station Permit

#### **Claims 11/25/25 – 12/8/25**

24/7 FITNESS \$233.00, 308 PLUMBING SOLUTIONS \$330.00, ACE HARDWARE \$266.34, ADVANCED SERVICES, INC. \$924.00, AFLAC \$1,391.56, ALLO COMMUNICATIONS \$3,431.50, AMAZON CAPITAL SERVICES \$8,516.18, AMERITAS LIFE INSURANCE CORP. \$589.24, ANGEL POOR BEAR \$75.00, ANNA GAMBOA \$75.00, ART AWISZUS \$189.90, AT&T MOBILITY \$379.59, BAIRD HOLM LLP \$455.00, BENZEL PEST CONTROL \$110.06, BLUFFS FACILITY SOLUTIONS \$619.26, BORDER STATES INDUSTRIES, INC \$1,974.29, BROWN'S SHOE FIT COMPANY \$235.00, CENGAGE LEARNING/GAGE \$32.79, CENTURY BUSINESS PRODUCTS, INC \$136.31, CITY OF GERING \$15,663.53, COLUMN SOFTWARE, PBC \$55.09, CONNECTING POINT \$2,819.68, CONTRACTORS MATERIALS, INC. \$77.50, DEARBORN LIFE INSURANCE COMPAN \$106.64, DOMINIC WILLIAMS \$224.69, DOOLEY OIL \$79.56, EAKES INC \$320.80, ECOLAB \$2,643.05, ELITE TOTAL FITNESS \$131.00, ELLICOTT DREDGE TECHNOLOGIES \$19,910.00, FASTENAL COMPANY \$291.31, FAT BOYS TIRE & AUTO \$4,789.42, FIRST NATIONAL BANK OF OMAHA \$8,012.27, FIRST NATIONAL BANK OMAHA - POLICE \$584.00, FLOCK GROUP INC \$21,500.00, FLOYD'S TRUCK CENTER, INC. \$1,642.17, FRANK PARTS COMPANY \$1,084.65, FRASER STRYKER PC LLO \$94.00, FYR-TEK, INC. \$2,144.50, GALLS, AN ARAMARK COMPANY \$57.24, GERING VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPT. \$16,173.00, GRAINGER \$248.16, GROUND UP CONSTRUCTION & CLEAN \$5,052.13, HEIMAN FIRE EQUIPMENT \$422.36, HENNING BROTHERS \$83.00, IDEAL LAUNDRY AND CLEANERS, INC. \$634.53, INLAND TRUCK PARTS CO. \$6,295.93, INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE \$60,117.01, INTRALINKS, INC. \$7,613.00, IRBY TOOL & SAFETY \$6,176.86, J RODZ \$95.00, JEO CONSULTING GROUP \$3,000.00, JM STUCCO \$750.00, JOHN HANCOCK USA \$19,495.66, JOHN HANCOCK USA FIRE \$1,075.74, JOHN HANCOCK USA POLICE \$12,564.37, JOHNSON CASHWAY CO. \$14.89, KEEP SCOTTSBLUFF-GERING BEAUTI \$5,000.00, KILGORE MEMORIAL LIBRARY \$30.00, LEAGUE ASSOC./RISK MANAGEMENT \$2,250.57, LIGHTHOUSE ELECTRICAL \$17,418.83, MACQUEEN EQUIPMENT, LLC \$120.36, MARK CHRISMAN TRUCKING \$28,603.75, MASEK DISTRIBUTING INC \$148.22, MATHESON TRI-GAS INC \$190.49, MATTY B'S HVAC \$859.03, MONUMENT ELECTRIC \$7,412.03, MUNICIPAL SUPPLY, INC. OF NE. \$3,132.93, MURPHY TRACTOR & EQUIPMENT CO. \$170.72, MUTUAL OF OMAHA \$4,944.85, NEBRASKA CHILD SUPPORT PAYMENT CENTE \$714.93, NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF REV (PR) \$17,624.23, NEBRASKA PUBLIC HEALTH ENVIRO LAB \$93.00, NEBRASKA STATE TREASURER \$2,753.27, NKC TIRE \$192.60, NORTHWEST PIPE FITTINGS, INC \$762.40, ONE CALL CONCEPTS, INC \$97.42, O'REILLY AUTOMOTIVE STORE \$218.91, PAM BRACKEEN \$75.00, PANHANDLE ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICE, INC. \$150.00, PANHANDLE POWER SYSTEMS LLC \$2,200.00, PATTLEN ENTERPRISES, INC \$192.43, PETE'S QUICK LUBE \$216.11, PIPE WORKS PLUMBING LLC \$650.00, PT HOSE AND BEARING \$122.91, QUADIANT POSTAGE FUNDING \$810.96, QUINTON ENLOW \$75.00, REGIONAL CARE INC. \$536.00, RIVERSTONE BANK \$632.72, RPM FITNESS \$70.00,

SANDBERG IMPLEMENT, INC. \$402.99, SCB COUNTY REGISTER OF DEEDS \$20.00, SCOTT M. BOSSE \$2,500.00, SCOTTSBLUFF-GERING UNITED WAY \$273.02, SE MUNICIPAL SOLAR (NE), LLC \$4,565.68, TAYLOR MADE GOLF COMPANY \$1,586.00, TEAM CHEVROLET \$600.00, TERESA TOSH \$18,167.42, THE TORO COMPANY \$315.00, TRANSWEST \$45.02, UNITED HEALTH CARE \$141,258.06, VERIZON WIRELESS SERVICES, LLC \$553.99, WESTERN COOPERATIVE COMPANY \$5,472.12, WESTERN PATHOLOGY CONSULTANTS \$71.00, YMCA OF SCOTTSBLUFF \$925.00, TOTAL \$517,231.73

**Motion by Councilmember Gillen to approve the Consent Agenda. Second by Councilmember Frye. There was no discussion. Mayor Ewing called for the vote. "AYES": Shields, Gillen, Frye, Kinsey, Wiedeman, Morrison, Jackson. "NAYS": None. Abstaining: None. Absent: O'Neal. Motion carried.**

#### **PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

##### **1. Public hearing to consider recommending the issuance or denial of a Class C Liquor License for 4 Knights LLC d/b/a Stagecoach Stop, 320 M Street, Gering, NE**

Mayor Ewing opened a public hearing to consider recommending the issuance or denial of a Class C Liquor License for 4 Knights LLC d/b/a Stagecoach Stop, 320 M Street, Gering, NE at 6:04 p.m.

Councilmember Wiedeman asked why the applicants were applying for a Class C License, which is on and off-site sale. Applicant, Russ Knight, explained that one level of where he's headed is to enhance his in-house rental with a restaurant. In the future, he may be working towards alcohol slushie machines which require a Class C License.

Mayor Ewing entertained public comment regarding this public hearing. Hearing none and with no further comments, the administrative record was closed and the public hearing closed at 6:05 p.m.

##### **1a. Recommend approving or denying the issuance of a Class C Liquor License for 4 Knights LLC d/b/a Stagecoach Stop, 320 M Street, Gering, NE**

**Motion by Councilmember Gillen to recommend approving the issuance of a Class C Liquor License for 4 Knights LLC d/b/a Stagecoach Stop, 320 M Street in Gering. Second by Councilmember Wiedeman. There was no discussion. Mayor Ewing called for the vote. "AYES": Shields, Gillen, Frye, Kinsey, Wiedeman, Morrison, Jackson. "NAYS": None. Abstaining: None. Absent: O'Neal. Motion carried.**

#### **CURRENT BUSINESS:**

##### **1. Consider approving and authorizing the Mayor to sign Agreement to Provide Consulting Services by and between the City of Gering and Retail Strategies, LLC**

Administrator Heath stated that staff has talked with other cities that have seen growth in their retail businesses and how they are managing their retail recruitment. Some communities hire an economic development director, some hire recruitment firms and others have both a development director and a recruiter. The one thing they noted was that if a community isn't growing, then it's dead.

Gering needs growth in agricultural, industrial and retail businesses. Gering also needs to see growth in housing, daycares and most of all, workforce. Growth spreads the tax burden out for businesses and residents.

Staff is proposing to use some of the City's LB840 funds to hire a retail recruitment firm to assist Twin Cities Development in recruiting retail businesses to Gering. Twin Cities Development is assisting current businesses with expansion and are working to recruit new commercial and industrial businesses to Gering, but they don't always have that individual contact with companies and this is where a recruitment firm can bridge that gap and increase Gering's chances for success.

In 2022, TCD and the City began discussions with Retail Strategies. At that time, there were still effects of Covid and the local economy was struggling, interest rates were climbing, there was a housing shortage and a shortage in workforce. For that reason, staff put the consideration of a retail recruitment firm on hold.

Administrator Heath explained that with the economy beginning to turn the corner and with a commitment from a developer to develop 300 housing units over the next 10 years, and the possibility of development along the expressway, he believes it is time to consider hiring a retail recruiting firm.

Retail Strategies has successfully worked with other communities in Nebraska and staff believe they are a good fit for Gering and a good fit to partner with TCD. Gering cannot wait for retail businesses to come here - "We must be on the offence to compete with other communities for those businesses."

He invited John Tiedt, Director of Community Partnerships with Retail Strategies, to join the meeting for a short presentation on the services they provide and how they can work side by side with TCD to recruit retail businesses to the Gering community. He also invited Jordan Detrich, Director of TCD, to be present to answer any questions Council may have for them. Mr. Tiedt joined the meeting via Zoom and provided a presentation for the Council on the overhead screens. The presentation is on file in the City Clerk's Office.

Twin Cities Development Director, Jordan Diedrich, addressed Council and stated they've been talking to Retail Strategies for a couple years. They feel this is the time to hit the ground running. Retail recruitment is a specialized field requiring national connections with brokers, developers and retail brands. John and his team know people; they help communities do these types of things. They bring the data-driven market analysis to retailers currently expanding. This compliments TCD, it's not replacing it. He elaborated on what TCD is doing and will continue to do. TCD can assist Retail Strategies with local relationships. TCD will also be contributing to the contract cost with Retail Strategies in addition to what Gering pays. TCD will also share any data they've collected with Retail Strategies. The focus in this collaboration is Gering; TCD won't be conflicted with the intent of developing new businesses in Gering versus other area cities. Administrator Heath clarified that the funds for this endeavor will come from the LB840 Fund. He added that Gering is competing with everyone in the region, cities in this part of the state, and North Platte as well. Some communities have the interstate traffic nearby; Gering doesn't. "The goal is to get business to our City so people want to remain here and/or move to our community." He has seen what other communities are doing and he thinks Gering can do better.

**Motion by Councilmember Morrison to approve and authorize the Mayor to sign an Agreement to Provide Consulting Services by and between the City of Gering and Retail Strategies, LLC. Second by Councilmember Wiedeman. There was no discussion. Mayor Ewing called for the vote. "AYES": Shields, Gillen, Frye, Kinsey, Wiedeman, Morrison, Jackson. "NAYS": None. Abstaining: None. Absent: O'Neal. Motion carried.**

**2. Consider approving and authorizing the Mayor to sign Agreement Regarding Waste Collection Equipment by and between the City of Bayard, the City of Gering and Don's Services, LLC**

**Motion by Councilmember Morrison to approve and authorize the Mayor to sign an Agreement Regarding Waste Collection Equipment by and between the City of Bayard, the City of Gering and Don's Services, LLC. Second by Councilmember Kinsey. There was no discussion. Mayor Ewing called for the vote. "AYES": Shields, Gillen, Frye, Kinsey, Wiedeman, Morrison, Jackson. "NAYS": None. Abstaining: None. Absent: O'Neal. Motion carried.**

**3. Park, Cemetery and Tree Board 2025 Tree Report presented by Board Member, Phillip Schmitt**

Park, Cemetery and Tree Board Member, Phillip Schmitt, provided the 2025 Annual Tree Report. The report is available on the City's website at [www.gering.org](http://www.gering.org). Mr. Schmitt noted that in August of this year, he and Amy Seiler, Director of Parks and Recreation, attended the Tree City USA Recognition Day in Kearney. The City of Gering received the Tree City USA designation for the 35<sup>th</sup> consecutive year, which is remarkable. In order to get that, the City has to have a Tree Board, a public tree ordinance, an annual Arbor Day celebration and an annual expenditure of \$2.00 per capita; last year it was \$9.89 per capita. More importantly to him, is the Growth Award. Gering received its 29<sup>th</sup> annual Growth Award which is for communities that demonstrate higher levels of tree care and community engagement during the calendar year. They award points for everything that is done with trees; for example, having a tree dump, creating mulch and many other activities. In 2023, the Park Board did a tree plotter program with the Nebraska Forest Service. They did a count of every tree in the parks, golf course and cemetery as well as street trees. To date, there are 8,542 trees in those areas. This was done with the help of the National Forest Service who sent out a couple people to help count the street trees. Other than that, it was all done by volunteers of the Park Board. Mr. Schmitt and Amy Seiler presented the Tree Inventory Report on the overhead screens and demonstrated how it works. The Tree Plotter is a living document. All tree maintenance that is done on any tree is documented on the plotter throughout the year. New trees that are planted are added to the inventory. Mr. Schmitt

further demonstrated the tree plotter and talked about how valuable a tool it is for staff and the Park Board. He also discussed how many new trees were planted in City parks last year which also contributes to receiving the Growth Award – as well as presenting this report to Council each year. He added that there are 229 trees in the Arboretum at Northfield Park representing 38 different species. Discussion followed about Pine Wilt and other diseases that affect trees and could potentially impact hundreds of trees in the City's tree canopies.

**Motion by Councilmember Gillen to enter the Park, Cemetery and Tree Board 2025 Annual Tree Report into the public record. Second by Councilmember Jackson. There was no discussion. Mayor Ewing called for the vote. "AYES": Shields, Gillen, Frye, Kinsey, Wiedeman, Morrison, Jackson. "NAYS": None. Abstaining: None. Absent: O'Neal. Motion carried.**

**4. Consider request for a Public Safety Committee meeting with agenda item: 1.) Discuss proposed ordinance regarding RVs (recreational vehicles), trailers, boats, UTVs and ATVs parked on City streets**

**Motion by Councilmember Wiedeman to approve a request for a Public Safety Committee meeting with agenda item: 1.) Discuss proposed ordinance regarding RVs (recreational vehicles), trailers, boats, UTVs and ATVs parked on City streets. Second by Councilmember Morrison. There was no discussion. Mayor Ewing called for the vote. "AYES": Shields, Gillen, Frye, Kinsey, Wiedeman, Morrison, Jackson. "NAYS": None. Abstaining: None. Absent: O'Neal. Motion carried.**

**5. Consider recommendation by the Public Safety Committee regarding use of RVs (recreational vehicles) in residential areas**

Administrator Heath stated that before Council begins a discussion on the recommendation proposed by the Public Safety Committee regarding the use of recreational vehicles within city limits, he wanted to explain the purpose and intent behind this item so everyone understands why it is before the Council at this meeting.

In recent months, the City of Gering has received complaints and concerns from citizens regarding individuals living in RVs on residential lots. Gering's current zoning code does not and has not allowed this use. Long-term residential use of an RV in residential zoning has never been permitted. Staff reached out to several First and Second Class Cities and did not find any cities that allow long-term living in an RV in residential areas.

The City's Zoning Code alone does not provide the enforcement tools necessary for City staff to effectively address these situations. The goal of the ordinance that was proposed earlier this fall was not to take away anyone's rights as a property owner. What was being addressed is permanent or long-term living situations in RVs in residential areas, which presents several safety and sanitation concerns. Long-term RV occupancy also changes the intended density and character of single-family neighborhoods.

The City must protect the health, safety, and overall quality of life in Gering's neighborhoods. It is not intended to inconvenience or target anyone unnecessarily. "It is about ensuring that our community remains safe, livable, and consistent with established zoning standards."

It is important to note that no decision has been made at this time. The City Council will not be voting on an ordinance at this meeting. However, this decision rests solely with the elected members of the City Council. The City appreciates the public's interest and participation as the Council considers this matter and discusses what is best for the safety and well-being of our community.

City Engineer, Annie Folck, added that staff don't have extremely strong feelings on this matter one way or the other. The biggest thing staff is asking for from Council is direction. When staff receive calls from the public complaining because someone has an RV and has someone living in it, staff want to be able to address that. If Council chooses to find a path to make it legal, that of course has zoning implications and would have to go through the Planning Commission to make changes to the Zoning Code. It will and should take a long time and require more public input because it could have a pretty significant change on the City's neighborhoods if that's the route Council wants to pursue. "If Council wants to say no, we don't want to have people living in RVs period in residential districts, that's

okay too." Basically, staff just needs to know what the City's standards are going to be, and to have a way to enforce it because right now, zoning does not allow for it, but it's very difficult to enforce. Zoning is most effective when people come to pull building permits or get certificates of occupancy; that's typically when staff are able to enforce zoning. When people move an RV into their neighborhood, staff don't have that step, or the usual method of enforcing zoning. Instead, staff have to go to legal and go through the court system to try to get someone to stop with this use; it's expensive and it takes a very long time. If the City wants to continue to prohibit it in residential areas, a better enforcement mechanism is needed. That's what staff is asking Council for - some direction. "Let us know how you want us to handle this matter."

Administrator Heath added that the Public Safety Committee met on November 19 and there was a recommendation from that Committee to send to the full Council which was consideration for granting CUPs (Conditional Use Permits) for living in RVs. That's what the agenda item is for at this meeting. If that's pursued, at least Council has some say in it. He turned it over to Council for comments.

Council member Jackson stated that he asked Captain Rogers to pull some calls for service for the last month on the RV situation. Captain Rogers replied that he pulled numbers on two properties that they know about. One of them, they have had three calls on in just the last four days. The other one they've had five calls on going back to September when the issue reared its head. The ones that go back to September were about someone living in an RV on a property, there were noise complaints, people coming and going at different hours of the night, to the most recent one where a diesel tank had to be removed from underneath the camper because of a safety issue. The other property that Police have been dealing with since the past weekend is actually the property owner complaining about the camper being on their property. They are having a hard time getting these people to leave. They are trying to work through the process of eviction, because right now they don't have an enforcement mechanism through ordinance. Councilmember Wiedeman asked if the owner allowed them to live there. Captain Rogers replied he believes so; he thinks that's originally how it started. Now the property owner cannot get them off. It's a property the Police Department has dealt with on some other issues. They are not getting any cooperation from the people in the camper. Councilmember Wiedeman asked if the property owner owns the camper. Captain Rogers replied that he doesn't know who owns the camper.

Administrator Heath clarified with City Attorney Ellison that in those cases, if they have a written or verbal agreement to allow them to live on that property and they change their mind over time, depending on that length of time, that they would fall under the Tenant-Landlord Act. Attorney Ellison replied, yes, that is correct.

Councilmember Morrison asked if the owner wanted to sell that property to someone else, and those squatters say "No, we live here, you're not getting rid of us" - could they do that? Attorney Ellison replied they could always make that claim, yes. She asked if the next owner would be stuck with those people in the camper. Attorney Ellison replied not necessarily, it depends on how it gets resolved.

Councilmember Weideman asked Captain Rogers if there was any report of illegal dumping of sewage. He replied there has been one that came directly to the City Engineer. Councilmember Wiedeman noted that that's one of the complaints she has heard from people in her ward - people dumping in the alley in the Northfield area. She instructed them that when that happens, to call the Call Center and file a complaint. Engineer Folck added that she received a complaint about that issue east of 10th Street.

Councilmember Gillen stated that currently, the City is dealing with three properties; one wants a methodology for an eviction and to have the City put in something to get that accomplished. The other one is a noise complaint issue where there are noise ordinances to address that. Captain Rogers replied yes, that aspect PD can deal with under current noise ordinances. Councilmember Gillen went on to say and the potential third one, which is illegal dumping of sewage within city limits, is also enforceable by ordinance. Captain Rogers replied yes, it is. Mayor Ewing commented on the one regarding the diesel tank; the Fire Department would be interested in that one. Chief Holthus replied that the Fire Department did deal with that issue.

Administrator Heath added that he was in conversation with someone earlier in the day and there was a fourth one mentioned to him as someone potentially living in an RV on the southwest side of Gering. Councilmember Gillen asked if it was a complaint or just letting the City know someone was living in one. Administrator Heath replied it was more letting him know someone might be living in one.

Councilmember Jackson stated that the City is dealing with people living in RVs and Council needs to come up with an ordinance to match the zoning. He hates to just say well that's going to be a noise disturbance and not address the actual issue of people living in RVs.

Councilmember Morrison commented that if she were to go buy a property and the house next to it had an RV sitting in the backyard, she might be detoured as to if she would want to live there or not, not knowing who's going to come in. "We can't turn these into Airbnbs - they are campers. We can't just rent them out and use them as a money maker. We've got to figure out something."

Councilmember Gillen explained that the City can put all of these things and ordinances in place, but if there isn't a methodology to track, document, enforce... There have been a lot of complaints for a lot of other things including weeds too tall, broken down cars, and all those other things for which there are ordinances in place to prevent them from happening. "And we are struggling as a municipality to enforce our ordinances that are on the books." He agrees that the City needs a methodology for addressing people living in RVs. That's not the intended use, that is not something covered by zoning. That's why at the Public Safety meeting they talked about if by chance there is a property that could accommodate a camper and the other people around them didn't care, that there would be an avenue for somebody that had relatives that needed to stay with them long-term. "It would create an avenue as opposed to a hard stop no, we don't care what's happening in your life." He's reluctant to put more ordinances on the books without some assurances from Police and City Administration that staff is going to enforce the City's codes. Councilmember Morrison noted "At least we'd have an avenue to enforce them with." Councilmember Gillen replied, but they're no good on paper unless they are actually enforced. The City loses a lot of respect when it adds additional restrictions when what's already on the books isn't being enforced. There needs to be a better methodology and a better commitment to looking at our ordinances. City staff are driving the streets and alleyways every day. "We allow ourselves to be put in these boxes." The City did the alley cleanup project that caused such an uproar; those are things the City should've been doing all along. He just wants to make sure as Council goes into this "we are going in with our eyes wide open." He wants to hear what the plan is. What is the plan to track, monitor, and enforce. That's the commitment he would need from staff and administration that there's some methodology being put into enforcing the ordinances that are on the books.

Administrator Heath replied that staff have been working on different plans in different ways for code enforcement; it's not easy. He thinks they are making some progress; several letters went out last year and this current year. "Are we perfect? No." He thinks if someone talks to any City, they're probably going to say the same thing - that they struggle with this. Staff are working to correct that, and will get it corrected. When residents complain, staff have to have an avenue to be able to end the issue they are having. If there is someone living in an RV in a residential neighborhood that is not allowed in zoning - and yes, it can be dealt with through zoning code, but it takes up to six months at least to get it dealt with. With an ordinance in place, staff has a little faster fix - and that is what staff is asking in this case. He doesn't think this should be held up just because the City can't keep up on weed complaints or abandoned vehicles or unlicensed vehicles on the road. Staff has been working hard and will come up with a better plan. He explained the progress that has been made on the alley clearing project. "We are in no way perfect, we still struggle, but we will come up with a plan and have better enforcement."

Chief Holthus addressed Council and stated the code enforcement issue has been a topic not just within city staff, but within his department as well. It was originally a full-time civilian position. When he came, that person did code enforcement and animal control. When that person retired, the Police Department took that opportunity to supplement their patrol force with an extra police officer because he felt that was more bang for their buck. That was his decision with Lane Danielzuk who was there at that time. That was his decision based on what they felt the need was. They initially had an officer with an interest in doing code enforcement and he was tasked with doing those duties for the City. He did a lot of the heavy lifting. Through that process, it identified some flaws in the City's ordinances, some issues that were not conducive to successfully resolving these things quickly. They've been working on a variety of plans and different approaches on this since that time. After that officer stopped doing code enforcement, they did it by committee. Later, the City added a couple of positions with some bits of responsibility for code enforcement, but staff has not come up with a plan that is perfect. There is a Police Officer position they have not filled which is specifically by design and with discussions with Administrator Heath, the City Engineer and his staff because they know code enforcement is an issue. They need to make it a larger priority than what they have been doing; they are working through that to see what that looks like. Right now, a big part of the discussion is going to center on whose department and who would be best to serve. There are some schools of thought that

Public Works is the best place because they are the people that can come out and remedy some of these situations. There are other schools that say law enforcement people should handle it. There are other schools of thought that the City Planning and Zoning should handle it; those are all discussions they are having as staff. He added, regarding Councilmember Gillen's specific question about how they are going to document and monitor this as far as the RV ordinance - the proposed language of so many days in a month or week or year - those are going to be a nightmare to enforce. He assured Council that every time one of his team members goes out and knocks on that door, people are just going to say they're moving stuff into their camper or storing things in their camper or moving things in and out. That is a code enforcement issue and a nightmare for the Police Department to prove in a court of law. His suggestion is either it's allowed or it's not, because they aren't going to be able to prove much beyond that. He asked Councilmember Gillian if that answered his question. Councilmember Gillen replied yes, he struggles putting things on the books that make it even more challenging for Police Officers to do their job. Councilmember Wiedeman commented and not being able to be enforceable because if there's a maximum of 14 days, how are they going to get that information? Chief Holthus added and how are they going to prove they're living in it and not just storing things in it or using the bathroom because the bathroom in their home is under construction? He has some serious concerns about it and in his mind, it should be all or nothing. Either it's allowed or it's not.

Councilmember Frye stated that she understands where Councilmember Gillen is coming from because it isn't just with City Administration to enforce it. Coming from a prosecuting office, they have so many cases in the court system but they have to have that follow through with prosecution to get the message across. Her concern is that since September, they have had numerous complaints - that's four months since it has started to snowball. The City has to do something to stop the ball rolling. Chief Holthus noted in the prosecution's defense, their docket is full of a lot of things that are of more significance than someone's weeds or any number of other code enforcement issues. He's not minimizing that; if he lived next to it, he would absolutely be upset about it as well. The City has a City Attorney and City Prosecutors, and they are working through what can be done ordinance wise. They have researched if they can do a municipal court to deal with these things; they cannot. They are researching a variety of things to improve the City's response to this because they know they don't have it right. It's not working the way it needs to.

Administrator Heath reiterated what he talked about at the committee meeting. He has researched and reached out to roughly 13 cities and the majority of those do not allow any occupancy in RVs. There were three that allowed maybe seven consecutive days per year. There was one that allowed up to 14 days per year and another one that allowed three consecutive days with a max of 20 per year. The rest of them are all no occupancy. These were all first and second class cities. Kimball was the smallest city in that group and Grand Island was the largest. Staff can research more, but he thinks they'll find that the majority of cities do not allow RV occupancy on a full-time basis.

Councilmember Shields asked Administrator Heath what he was saying about the Conditional Use Permit. Administrator Heath replied that's what came out of the committee as a suggestion - to allow an applicant to apply for a CUP permit to allow someone to live in an RV on residential property. That is what the committee recommended. They were basically asking Council to send it to the Planning Commission to decide. The applicant would have to apply for a CUP, pay the appropriate fee, and go to the Planning Commission (if this was approved that way by Council). The Planning Commission would then accept or deny the application. Right now, that would be what Council would have to decide, if they want to send something like that to the Planning Commission to decide. Councilmember Morrison commented that if Council sends this to the Planning Commission, they're just passing the buck.

Councilmember Frye talked about a situation in Ogallala where they had to pass an ordinance that people cannot stay in a camper at a residence because it had snowballed there. It was a mess for a long time; she wants to avoid that in Gering.

Chief Holthus added that he was not trying to be critical of staff's efforts; staff was trying to create a balance between property rights and for people having their homes remodeled (or any other variety of exceptions). He did not mean for his comment to be derogatory towards staff that worked hard on a proposed ordinance. But from his level, it needs to be enforceable. The City needs to be able to prove in a court of law what is going on in that camper and he doesn't see any way that he can do that (with the proposed ordinance that includes a timeframe).

Councilmember Kinsey stated that he agrees with Councilmember Gillen, tracking and documentation can be a problem. He added, with everything that has been said, he would like to make a motion to direct staff to draft an ordinance banning RV living altogether.

**Motion by Councilmember Kinsey to direct staff to draft an ordinance banning RV living altogether. Second by Councilmember Frye. Councilmember Kinsey added to his motion - except in designated RV parks and trailer parks.**

**Discussion:** Councilmember Gillen clarified with that ordinance, that gives no leeway for people that might be remodeling; they would have to stay at a hotel or something else. Councilmember Kinsey replied, correct. He added or they could risk being fined if they stay in an RV if their neighbors complained. Councilmember Frey noted they can go to a campground or a designated spot. Councilmember Morrison stated they probably will do that or could do that if their neighbors didn't complain. Councilmember Kinsey replied "that's just it, it's going to be complaint-based." Councilmember Morrison added, but at least if there's a complaint, then something can be done. Councilmember Kinsey agreed with Chief Holthus, Council either needs to make it so it's illegal or make it so it's legal; anything in between just makes it more complicated. A Conditional Use Permit is passing the buck to a committee of appointees where they (Council) were elected to resolve this issue and not pass the buck to a committee.

Councilmember Gillen reminded Council that CUPs are not necessarily required to sit at the Planning Commission level. They can be required at the City Council level if the Council determines that that particular one is contentious enough; for example, slaughter houses have to come before the Council for a Conditional Use Permit. It's not as though Council is deferring to another organization, Council would determine who is responsible for those CUPs. That's not in the conversation here, what's in the conversation here is if Council is banning it altogether like no grandkids can spend the night in the camper without nosy neighbors saying there are lights on in the camper across the street and then the Police come. There are neighbors in this area that are not overly neighborly and don't like what anybody else is doing on their property.

Administrator Heath noted that Scottsbluff has an ordinance that does not allow a person to occupy any travel trailer outside of a trailer park which is licensed under that article. That ordinance has been in place since 2000. In doing some research, he saw some back to 1986 - he believes they had some type of restriction living in an RV in the late 80s and he was sure that happened because there were kids sleeping in an RV overnight or maybe family came and spent the weekend in the RV and it just wasn't caught. He doesn't think it's the full intention of the City of Gering to ban kids from camping in the yard or staying in an RV overnight where parents would probably feel more comfortable if kids are staying in an RV because they have something they can lock instead of just a zipper that's closed on a tent. He doesn't think that's something the City is going to be enforcing. Then again, like Councilmember Gillen said, there are some neighbors that aren't very neighborly, and there could be a complaint. Councilmember Gillen replied there is no selective enforcement; if it's a violation, it's a violation of an ordinance. Councilmember Wiedeman noted, if there's a complaint. Councilmember Gillen replied, even if there isn't a complaint... "If our officers observe someone violating an ordinance, technically their duty is to enforce the ordinance violation." Those are City laws that Council is requesting its law-enforcement to enforce. If they see somebody staying in an RV, whether somebody has complained or not, technically they should be enforcing the ordinance. Councilmember Kinsey added, but like it was stated earlier, them seeing it is going to be hard to verify.

Councilmember Gillen stated that he wants Council to be very cognizant of what they're walking into, what they're asking and what they're putting on the books. Councilmember Shields commented that she doesn't think it's fair to tell people what to do with their private property - two bad eggs ruining it for the whole community. If it was a noise ordinance, the City could use the noise ordinance and hopefully that would take care of it and Council wouldn't have to worry about banning everybody else from their campers. Mayor Ewing added that Council also has to remind themselves that Council is speaking for 8,500 people and not half a dozen or a dozen. Council has to protect the citizens of Gering, the entire city, of somebody having six campers in their backyard renting out lots by the month, or one not doing the proper maintenance and such. The City has things to back that up, but there are other places in this country that have become a real hazard to public health and safety. Gering is not immune to that.

The motion was reiterated: Motion by Councilmember Kinsey to direct staff to draft an ordinance banning RV living altogether except in designated RV parks and trailer parks or other designated areas. Councilmember Gillen noted that it needs to be very specific, not just "designated areas", otherwise it's also not enforceable.

**Mayor Ewing called for the vote. "AYES": Frye, Kinsey, Wiedeman, Morrison, Jackson. "NAYS": Shields, Gillen. Abstaining: None. Absent: O'Neal. Motion carried.**

**6. Consider approving and authorizing the Mayor to sign a Task Order 2 pertaining to an Agreement by and between the City of Gering and the City of Scottsbluff and HDR Engineering, Inc.**

**Motion by Councilmember Wiedeman to approve and authorize the Mayor to sign a Task Order 2 pertaining to an Agreement by and between the City of Gering and the City of Scottsbluff and HDR Engineering, Inc. Second by Councilmember Morrison. There was no discussion. Mayor Ewing called for the vote. "AYES": Shields, Gillen, Frye, Kinsey, Wiedeman, Morrison, Jackson. "NAYS": None. Abstaining: None. Absent: O'Neal. Motion carried.**

- 7. Consider approval of reappointment of Dale Hauck to the Board of Adjustment**
- 8. Consider approval of reappointment of Jody Miles to the Planning Commission**
- 9. Consider approval of reappointment of Tony Kaufman to the Planning Commission**
- 10. Consider approval of reappointment of Cathy Kaufman to the Planning Commission**
- 11. Consider approval of reappointment of Josh Schlaepfer to the Plumbing Board**
- 12. Consider approval of reappointment of Lucan Palomo to the Plumbing Board**

With no objections from the Council, Mayor Ewing entertained a motion to approve all the reappointments with one motion.

**Motion by Councilmember Shields to approve the reappointments of Dale Hauck to the Board of Adjustment, Jody Miles to the Planning Commission, Tony Kaufman to the Planning Commission, Cathy Kaufman to the Planning Commission, Josh Schlaepfer to the Plumbing Board and Lucan Palomo to the Plumbing Board. Second by Councilmember Gillen. There was no discussion. Mayor Ewing called for the vote. "AYES": Shields, Gillen, Frye, Kinsey, Wiedeman, Morrison, Jackson. "NAYS": None. Abstaining: None. Absent: O'Neal. Motion carried.**

#### **RESOLUTIONS:**

**1. Consider approving Resolution 12-25-1 regarding payment of claims in lieu of a second regular City Council meeting in December, 2025**

##### **Resolution 12-25-1**

**Whereas**, City of Gering claims are to be approved by the City Council for payment;

**Whereas**, The Gering City Council has chosen not to hold a second regular meeting in December, 2025 (which would have been held on the fourth Monday of the month);

**Whereas**, claims need to be processed and paid in a timely manner;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that City staff are authorized to prepare and pay claims that have been processed as if the second meeting in December, 2025 was held. The paid claims will then be presented to Council for review and approval at the first meeting in January, 2026.

**Adopted this 8<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2025.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Kent E. Ewing, Mayor**

**ATTEST:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Kathleen J. Welfl, City Clerk**

**Motion by Councilmember Wiedeman to approve Resolution 12-25-1 regarding payment of claims in lieu of a second regular City Council meeting in December, 2025. Second by Councilmember Gillen. There was no discussion. Mayor Ewing called for the vote. "AYES": Shields, Gillen, Frye, Kinsey, Wiedeman, Morrison, Jackson. "NAYS": None. Abstaining: None. Absent: O'Neal. Motion carried.**

## 2. Consider approving Resolution 12-25-2 regarding RCI (Regional Care Incorporated) 2025 Cafeteria Plan Amendment

### Resolution No. 12-25-2

**Whereas:** The Regional Care Inc. (RCI) 2025 Cafeteria Plan Amendment (Exhibit A) requires adoption by the governing body of the City of Gering;

**Whereas:** the "Employer" adopts this Amendment to implement provisions of Section 70404 of H.R. 1, 119th Cong. (2025) (popularly known as the "One Big Beautiful Bill Act");

**Whereas:** this Amendment supersedes the provisions of the Plan to the extent that those provisions are inconsistent with the provisions of this Amendment;

**Whereas:** the Plan will adopt the new limits of \$7500 effective as of the plan year beginning on or after January 1, 2026;

**Whereas:** RCI requires that the Amendment (Exhibit A) be adopted by resolution;

**Whereas:** The undersigned authorized representative of City of Gering (the Employer) hereby certifies that this resolution was duly adopted by "Employer" on December\_\_\_\_\_, 2025 and that such resolution has not been modified or rescinded as of the date hereof;

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the City Council of Gering, Nebraska that this Amendment to the \_\_\_\_\_ Plan is hereby approved and adopted, effective immediately, and that the authorized representative, Pat Heath, City Administrator, of the Employer is hereby authorized and directed to execute and deliver to the Plan Administrator the Amendment and to take any and all actions as it may deem necessary to effectuate this resolution.

The undersigned further certifies that attached hereto is a copy of the Amendment approved and adopted in the foregoing resolution.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Kent E. Ewing, Mayor

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk (SEAL)

**Motion by Councilmember Gillen to approve Resolution 12-25-2 regarding RCI (Regional Care Incorporated) 2025 Cafeteria Plan Amendment. Second by Councilmember Wiedeman. There was no discussion. Mayor Ewing called for the vote. "AYES": Shields, Gillen, Frye, Kinsey, Wiedeman, Morrison, Jackson. "NAYS": None. Abstaining: None. Absent: O'Neal. Motion carried.**

## 3. Consider approving Resolution 12-25-3 regarding amended fees at Monument Shadows Golf Course

### Resolution 12-25-3

**WHEREAS,** The Gering City Council, Gering, Nebraska shall establish green fees and fees for punch cards, memberships, cart rental, cart storage and other activities and services at Monument Shadows Golf Course.

**WHEREAS,** The Monument Shadows Golf Course Rates shall be as follows:

#### Monument Shadows Golf Course Rates

	<u>Rate</u>
<b>Daily Green Fees</b>	
9 holes	\$24.00
18 holes	\$36.00
9 holes jr. (8 <sup>th</sup> grade and under)	\$12.00
18 holes jr. (8 <sup>th</sup> grade and under)	\$18.00
All-day pass	\$48.00
Back 9 add on	\$12.00
<b>Punch Cards</b>	
(10) 9 Holes	\$216.00
(10) 18 Holes	\$324.00
(10) 9 Hole Cart Seat	\$103.50
(10) 18 Hole Cart Seat	\$207.00
<b>Annual Golf Pass</b>	
Youth (8 <sup>th</sup> Grade and under)	\$110.00

Student (18 & under/FT College Student 23 & under)	\$225.00
Junior (19-25)	\$465.00
Single	\$700.00
Couple (married)	\$985.00
Family (married + children 18 and under)	\$1,200.00

#### **Driving Range Daily Fees and Annual Pass**

Range Token	\$5.00
Single	\$200.00
Couple (married)	\$275.00
Family (married + children 18 & under)	\$350.00

#### **Daily cart fees per seat**

9 holes	\$11.50
18 holes	\$23.00

(Charge per seat, each person will pay the seat fee. If golfers choose not to ride together, they will be charged for both seats. \$23 for 9 and \$46 for 18 holes.)

#### **Yearly Cart SEAT Rental**

Single	\$600.00
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#### **Cart Storage**

Includes trail fee

#### **Annual Trail Fee**

Electric	\$285.00
Gas (includes fuel)	\$400.00
Additional seat in private cart per person	\$75.00

- Each private golf cart at Monument Shadows Golf Course shall have on primary owner. Family members (defined as married household and/or children 18 & under and/or full-time student 23 and under) will be authorized operators and may utilize the private carts without additional user fees. Or, the primary owner may add a second owner who may utilize the private cart with out additional user fees. Golfers who are not authorized operators shall be responsible to pay either the annual additional user fee or a daily user fee in order to ride on the private cart.

#### **Daily Trail Fees**

Per seat per 9 holes	\$8
Per seat per 18 holes	\$16
Un-authorized private cart user per 9 holes	\$5.25
Un-authorized private cart user per 18 holes	\$11.50

The annual pass fees, cart storage and annual trail fees will go into effect December 9, 2025

Daily fees go into effect 4/1/2026. All Fees include tax.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that effective immediately, the City of Gering shall charge the aforementioned fees at the Monument Shadows Golf Course.**

**Adopted this 8th of December 2025.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Kent Ewing, Mayor

**ATTEST:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Kathy Welfl, City Clerk

Councilmember Wiedeman stated that the Recreation Committee met with Amy Seiler and Pat Heath the week prior to this meeting. The Committee discussed these rates with staff and even though they are going up, they are small incremental amounts. Staff and the committee were concerned if the City doesn't keep up with inflation, and due to the fact that everything is costing more including labor, that the City will wind up being behind the eight ball. Even though it is an increase, they felt the increases needed to be made just so the City can keep up with costs going forward. She further explained the minimum wage increases for amenities like the swimming pool. Costs, supplies and things that are used at all of these facilities are going up and the City needs to keep up with that. They're incremental and small enough that hopefully they won't make a big difference to somebody. Councilmember Kinsey pointed out that the golf course is an enterprise fund and it needs to profit, it needs to make money so the City can keep the golf course as beautiful as it is. Councilmember Gillen commended staff for being proactive and looking at rates on an annual basis so there aren't large adjustments. He thanked staff for their

analysis; he like to see what other municipalities are doing and charging.

**Motion by Councilmember Kinsey to approve Resolution 12-25-3 regarding amended fees at Monument Shadows Golf Course. Second by Councilmember Morrison. There was no discussion. Mayor Ewing called for the vote. "AYES": Shields, Gillen, Frye, Kinsey, Wiedeman, Morrison, Jackson. "NAYS": None. Abstaining: None. Absent: O'Neal. Motion carried.**

**4. Consider approving Resolution 12-25-4 regarding amended fees at the Gering Municipal Swimming Pool**

**Resolution 12-25-4**

**WHEREAS, The Gering City Council, Gering, Nebraska shall establish fees for services City of Gering Municipal Swimming Pool**

**WHEREAS, Gering Municipal Swimming Pool Rates shall be as follows:**

**Gering Municipal Swimming Pool Fee Schedule**

**Daily Fee**

4 & Under	Free
Youth 5-15	\$4.00
Adult	\$5.00
Lap Swim	\$3.00

**Annual Pass**

Single	\$75.00
Family	\$140.00
Lap Swim	\$45.00

**Swimming Lessons**

With pool pass	\$30.00
Without pool pass	\$45.00

**Private Pool Party**

\$200 for two hours

Applicable taxes included in fees.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that effective December 9, 2025 the City of Gering shall charge the aforementioned fees at the Gering Municipal Swimming Pool**

**PASSED AND APPROVED THIS 8<sup>th</sup> day of December 2025.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Kent Ewing, Mayor

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Kathy Welfl, City Clerk

**Motion by Councilmember Wiedeman to approve Resolution 12-25-4 amended fees at the Gering Municipal Swimming Pool. Second by Councilmember Gillen. There was no discussion. Mayor Ewing called for the vote. "AYES": Shields, Gillen, Frye, Kinsey, Wiedeman, Morrison, Jackson. "NAYS": None. Abstaining: None. Absent: O'Neal. Motion carried.**

**5. Consider approving Resolution 12-25-5 regarding amended fees at the Robidoux RV Park**

**Resolution 12-25-5**

**WHEREAS, The Gering City Council, Gering, Nebraska shall establish fees for services at Robidoux RV Park.**

**WHEREAS, Robidoux RV Park Rates shall be as follows:**

**Robidoux RV Park Fee Schedule**

Robidoux Multi-Purpose Room \$175 for full day usage (8 AM to 11 PM)

**Daily Rates**

Full hook-up (E/W/S)	\$46.00
Electric/Water	\$41.00
Tent (water and electric)	\$17.00
Dry Camping (no hook-ups)	\$15.00

	<u>Weekly Rates</u>
Full hook-up (E/W/S)	\$276.00
Electric/Water	\$246.00
Tent (water and electric)	\$102.00
Dry Camping (no hook-ups)	\$90.00

	<u>Monthly Rate</u> (November 1 through March 31 only)
Full hook-up (E/W/S)	\$644.00
Electric/Water	\$574.00
Tent (water and electric)	\$238.00
Dry Camping (no hook-ups)	\$210.00

Dump Station \$10.00 (Only applies to non-guests)

\*Gering residents are allowed 1 free dump station visit per month with a copy of Gering utility bill presented at RV Park Office.

Dump station is closed November 1-May 1.

Applicable taxes and fees will be applied at the time of transaction.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that effective January 1, 2026 the City of Gering shall charge the aforementioned fees at the Robidoux RV Park.

**PASSED AND APPROVED THIS 8<sup>th</sup> day of December 2025.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor Kent Ewing

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Kathy Welfl, City Clerk

**Motion by Councilmember Wiedeman to approve Resolution 12-25-5 amended fees at the Robidoux RV Park. Second by Councilmember Gillen. There was no discussion. Mayor Ewing called for the vote. "AYES": Shields, Gillen, Frye, Kinsey, Wiedeman, Morrison, Jackson. "NAYS": None. Abstaining: None. Absent: O'Neal. Motion carried.**

**BIDS/PROPOSALS:** None.

## **REPORTS:**

### **1. Liaison Report – Twin Cities Development, Councilmember Morrison**

Councilmember Morrison reported:

#### **Workforce Development:**

-EKitchen Success Story: Two Smoking Grills started in Ekitchen in Gering, bought food truck and now have brick and mortar building.

#### **Community Development:**

- Listed 33 sites and buildings
- Held 65 start-up business consultations
- Provided 126 resource folders to new businesses
- Assisted Scott Free Brewing Company with LB840
- Sent over 55,000 business attraction emails for retail and commercial/industrial
- Partnered with Scotts Bluff County on Placer AI to assist Gering Tourism, and Parks and Rec with foot traffic data
- Assisting Gering Tourism with Creative District, including NAC grant application, strategic plan, and workbook
- Assisted with Scotts Bluff County Clean Up Event by being the fiscal agent

#### **Marketing:**

- Attended (had a booth) the NIFA Housing Expo for third year in a row to attract developers
- Applied for and were selected to be featured in Season 3, episode 3 of My Town on YouTube (January 2027)

#### **Grants:**

- First Responder Grants
- Humane Society Grants
- Gering Landbank and Brownfield Technical Assistance Grant
- Scrap Tire Clean up Grants (2)

-Creative District Nebraska Arts Council Grants (2)

**Housing:**

- Rural Workforce Housing: over \$5 million for 33 rehabs and 12 new construction units
- Added 8 new apartment units to our Northfield building in Gering
- At capacity in Northfield Haven in Gering (15 units for adults with developmental disabilities)
- Hosting a housing conference in Gering on April 10<sup>th</sup>

**Other:**

- Officially changed name to Trusted Community Development (TCD)
- Starting a Community Ambassadors Program to welcome newcomers to the community by pairing them with community members with similar interests
- Working on hosting a business pitch competition in Spring of 2027
- Submitting Economic Development Certified Community recertification for the City of Gering by the end of the year.

**CLOSED SESSION:** (Council reserves the right to enter into closed session if deemed necessary.) None.

**OPEN COMMENT:** Discussion or action by Council regarding unscheduled business will not take place. This section is for citizen comment only.

Steve Morgheim, 2150 Pacific Blvd., Gering, stated that during the November 24th Council Meeting, he mentioned that Committee 867 would donate the book, Addiction By Design, to the Gering Library. He was sorry to inform Council that the donation was not accepted.

Consistently he hears that, "We really, really need gambling revenue promised by the Racino developer." That suggests that a serious revenue crisis lies on the horizon. If so, he suggested that City and County officials come forward and outline this impending crisis and show community stakeholders why the anchored-in development strategy of 'tourism destination' is falling short. In his humble opinion, considering only Solution A (Racino), is not a strategically wise way to confront the anticipated revenue crisis.

He believes it faces a significant political obstacle. For example, the Nebraska Gambling Commission received a study amendment showing that a Racino in Bellevue, NE, would not "cannibalize" gambling revenue of established sites in Eastern Nebraska; but it most likely has the potential to do just that to sites in Iowa; most specifically that in Council Bluffs.

"Let's think out of the box and develop other options. Divest some under-performing City assets: one being the Five Rocks Concert venue - pretty it is, but poor of pocket. Rezone it, sell it, dot the elevations with upscale homes, reap substantial property taxes, utility fees and population growth."

To generate the vitalization promised in the City's Comprehensive Plan to downtown core business stakeholders, divest the Civil Center to parties that have a proven record of event development and production.


And finally, if there is no financial crisis looming on the horizon, turn down Option A, the Racino - for it will, over-time, become another white elephant that brings addiction, increased pressure on City assets, and social burdens to the at-risk stakeholders in the community. He thanked the Mayor and Council for their hard work and time.

**ADJOURN:**


**Motion by Councilmember Gillen to adjourn. Second by Councilmember Morrison. There was no discussion. Mayor Ewing called for the vote. "AYES": Shields, Gillen, Frye, Kinsey, Wiedeman, Morrison, Jackson. "NAYS": None. Abstaining: None. Absent: O'Neal. Motion carried.**

Meeting adjourned at 7:51 p.m.

ATTEST:

  
Kathleen J. Welfl, City Clerk



  
Kent E. Ewing, Mayor